

SPRIT OF THE PRESS.

EDITORIAL OPINIONS OF THE LEADING JOURNALS UPON CURRENT TOPICS—COMPILED EVERY DAY FOR THE EVENING TELEGRAPH.

Making Haste to be Rich.

The dreadful domestic tragedy which has just occurred in Philadelphia—the murder by an insane husband of his wife and two children, and his subsequent suicide—is full of warning to a large class of men who believe themselves to be peculiarly exempt from intellectual infirmities. Mr. Blackstone, the unfortunate gentleman who destroyed himself and his family, had invested his capital in a business which was really prosperous and profitable, but by the dishonesty of an accountant, a considerable amount of cash had been embezzled. There was no deficiency which the resources of the partnership were not ample to meet; but the theft and loss of so large a sum overthrew the mind of Mr. Blackstone, until in his madness he sought, with paroxysmal tenderness, to save those who were dear to him from want by consigning them to the tomb. The motive, if a man in his condition can be said to have a motive, was undoubtedly creditable to the best feelings of his nature; but the original delusion was a mistaken notion, a melancholy and morbid over-estimate of the value and importance of money. This delusion has at all times been a fruitful source of insanity. It has filled the brains of squalid alchemists with dreams of once a pleasure and a pain; it has beguiled the half-wild and half-demented miser into contentment with nakedness and an indifference to hunger; it has destroyed the sweetest natural relations and changed brothers to enemies; it has caused those who were at first ingenuous to become badly subtle and full of dissimulation; it has proved too strong for constitutional benevolence, and has made the hand close and gripping which nature meant should be generously open; it has developed new forms of felony and led men into peculiar and irresistible temptations; it has provoked disastrous breaches of the most sacred trusts and the cruel spoliation of the widow and the fatherless; and for more than a moiety of all the pain and misery of this groaning globe it is either directly or indirectly responsible. But avarice can hardly be considered at this time a distinguishing mark of the money-maker. Generally, if his gains have been great, his expenditures have kept pace with them, and he has been anxious to proclaim by luxurious ostentation the golden favors which have been bestowed upon him. But it is easy to see that this profusion only adds to his eager appetite by increasing the demand upon his check-book. To be rich contents the miser; to be thought rich is the passion of the modern votary of Plutus. This is not a feeling which is confined to Wall street, nor does it influence those alone who stir the foundations of the market by large transactions. If a man's sphere be a narrow one, within that sphere he wishes to be thought successful; and he looks eagerly and with a keen eye upon the small things to the broad noon-day of unlimited opulence. Such passions are uncontrolled, and are shared by most of those who buy and sell. Pecuniary losses become the worst of misfortunes; he who owes and cannot pay is the vilest of criminals; rivals in trade are hated and, if possible, crushed, until society seems to be held together only by the cohesive power of mutual loss and gain. Here and there is a man who is driven from his equanimity by the prospect of insolvency, and is half mad because he has promised what he cannot perform; but failure to most is distasteful because it will entail a diminution of importance and imply a want of commercial talent. A third or fourth place in the race may content the majority, but to be wholly distanced is intolerable. In one of Mr. Irving's earliest but most exquisite sketches there is the story of a merchant who was overtaken by bankruptcy, and whose principal thought was of the discomfort and privations which his young and lovely wife would be forced to undergo in consequence of his reverses, to suffer, if not to die, in consequence of his misfortune. The delightful moral of the tale—the cheerful acquiescence of an amiable and loving woman in misfortune, of the summer light which her presence diffused throughout the new and humble home. If men would but remember how many excellent pleasures, how many elevating pursuits, how many of the worthiest ends, are quite independent of mere material wealth; if they would but consider the ambitions which have become our better nature; if they would but think how true and how constant, and how self-sacrificing are oftenest most beautifully developed in an atmosphere of poverty; if they would but reflect that no bankruptcy can deprive them of the charms of nature, of the gratifications of study, of the happiness of home, they might be less eager in the pursuit of wealth, and less inconsolable for the loss of it. But we have forgotten the better half of the lesson which Dr. Franklin taught us. We are willing enough to thrive luxuriantly, but we are not willing to thrive moderately. It is safe to say that none of the admonitions of that fine old man, which are oftenest quoted in defense of acquisition, referred to enormous aggregations of private wealth such as in our day have become almost too common for notice. Happy is he that can hit upon the happy medium; who can fairly decide for himself the relative value of different schemes of life; and who can be content with poverty if it be his portion, or rise in the use of wealth should it be vouchsafed to him.

The Cuban Situation.

Whatever may be our views of the Cuban cause, we must not be blind to the fact that the insurgents have not yet made the degree of progress generally claimed for them. Exaggeration is the leading trait of all news from the island, both from the official and the insurgent side. We showed the other day how, in the Spanish stories, every cross-road skirmish was magnified to a great battle, and every dispersion of a knot of suspicious characters was telegraphed as a tremendous defeat of the patriots. What has become of that "utter rout of a great body of insurgents near Trinidad?" Ten days have since elapsed, and nothing has been heard of the affair. Rumor and report are absolutely all that we get from "the scene of conflict," and so trivial are even these that one begins to doubt whether there is any conflict at all. Take the telegrams of the last ten days—they are the merest twaddle. Cuban news is a mere repetition of Cretan, which was so untrustworthy as to revive the uncomplimentary Cretan description of St. Paul. That "reliable gentleman" sends us a figure, along with the "intelligent contraband," in our own war, has evidently taken up his abode with the Queen of the Antilles, and is plying his old vocation. First he tells us that "the Peruvian monitors are certainly aiding the insurrection"—although the official pledge of neutrality under which Peru took this has been made public. Next he tells us that "within a few days the insurgents will have possession of a seaport"; but he has told us that for three months. He speaks of Havana as being somewhat in the position of the Viceroy of Egypt, under whose seat a "loaded bomb" was lately put; whereas, private residents there tell us they would hardly suspect that an insurrection existed but for the newspapers. An English gentleman—an impartial observer—lately rode on horseback through the whole of that "insurrectionary district" of which our "reliable gentleman" regularly sends us maps, shaded with various degrees of blackness, to indicate the spread of rebellion. At each village he paused and inquired where the insurrection was. "At —, so many miles ahead," was the invariable response. He got to Havana without finding it. We would not underrate the insurrection, which is a very serious affair, and promises one day to be successful. But what we say is that sympathy must not lead observers to discount a success not yet attained. The real efforts of the Cubans will probably be made in summer, when, as Mayor Hall says, General Yellow Jack will take the field against the foreign levies, and the native troops will be better disciplined to fight. There has yet been nothing like a pitched battle, and hardly even a respectable skirmish.

We rightly understand the General, we fancy the date of the question in regard to his going to Mexico would be as to whether there is anything to be done there. Has the President or has the national policy in regard to that country? If there is any definite line of conduct towards the neighboring republic to be followed and any result is sought the mission has another character altogether, and the man of high talents with an incentive of a possible success declines no hardship, excuses himself from no privation, and faces all consequences; for earnest endeavor makes him superior to all these. This is what we want, then, before we send a good man to Mexico—something to send him for. From our own view of the case we regard the Mexican mission as second to none in importance, but this view supposes national purposes. If we have not these to lift it into the number of places that afford a possible career, the sending of Siskles there is merely sending a accomplished gentleman on a tour in search of the picturesque when very likely he regards the picturesque as a bore.

Mr. Johnson and his Successor.

Mr. Johnson, who engaged in "swinging around the circle," is never over-choleic in epithets or over-conscious to opponents; but he could not have said anything in more execrable taste than he did at Knoxville, in exclaiming, "Thank God! my honors have not been gained through blood. The wounded soldiers cannot attribute their wounds to me." Compared with this, his Baltimore slur at his successor as being a willing "slave to Congress" was a compliment. All the blood Grant has shed has been in defense of that Constitution which Mr. Johnson still imagines himself to be the only guardian. It was noble blood, nobly offered, and it was because General Grant had so managed that this blood was not shed in vain, that his countrymen first turned their minds upon him for the Presidential chair. To slur at those whose "honors have been gained through blood" is to cast a reflection upon some of the best men of the land, of all opinions and all parties; it is to deny the ultimate tribute of patriotism.

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The Government Securities Investigation.

Two years ago a joint committee of the houses of Congress was appointed to investigate the alleged irregularities or frauds in the Printing Bureau of the Treasury Department, and to make a careful examination of the bonds, notes, and securities of the United States. The business was put into the hands of a sub-committee, composed of Senators Edmunds, Mr. Buckalew, and Mr. Halsey, and Senator Edmunds has now made a report for the committee. Two years ought to have been long enough to have investigated thoroughly the affairs and alleged irregularities of the Treasury. But after all this time the committee finished its labors, as those of every Congressional investigating committee end, in finding out nothing, or next to nothing. There is in the report a mass of verbiage about the duties of the several bureaus and offices, all of which we knew before, and about the magnitude of the Treasury transactions since the war; which also we knew, and then there are some suggestions about reforming or improving the service, which are all very well; but nothing was discovered of any consequence. For instance, we should like to know where the following missing bonds and notes went to:—

Table with columns: Date of Bonds and Notes, Amount. Includes entries for February 18, 1861 (\$1,000), March 2, 1861 (\$1,000), July 17, 1861 (\$1,000), August 19, 1861 (\$46,450), and Gold certificates (\$1,500,000).

We believe there is no doubt about these being missed and unaccounted for. If the committee failed to discover this fact, how much more may remain undiscovered? We fear the committee did not go beyond the walls of the Treasury Department to get information. It confined itself, probably, to the examination of those only who were interested in protecting the department. It was either incompetent or purposely left the irregularities or frauds covered up. Its labors are a miserable failure, and the result is the country gets nothing but a whitewashing report.

FURNITURE, ETC. FURNITURE. A. & H. LEJAMBRE. HAVE REMOVED THEIR Furniture & Upholstering Warerooms TO NO. 1127 CHESNUT STREET, GIRAUD ROW.

GREAT BARGAINS IN FURNITURE AT RICHMOND & CO'S, No. 45 South SECOND Street, EAST SIDE.

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MEUBLES FINO EN EXHIBICION, in Serie de Cuartos, COLOCADO COMO Salas de recibimiento y CUARTOS DE CAMARA. GEORGE J. HENKELS, THIRTEENTH AND CHESNUT, PHILADELPHIA.

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SPRING SALES. Embracing all the new styles of CARPETINGS, FLOOR OIL CLOTHS, MATTINGS, ETC. ETC. A GRAND OPENING OF NEW CARPETS THIS WEEK, ALL OF LATEST IMPORTATIONS. E. H. GODSHALK & CO., NO. 723 CHESNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

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FINANCIAL. UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD FIRST MORTGAGE 30 YEARS SIX PER CENT. GOLD BONDS, BOUGHT AND SOLD. DE HAVEN & BRO., DEALERS IN GOVERNMENT SECURITIES, GOLD, ETC., No. 40 South THIRD Street, PHILADELPHIA.

HENRY G. GOWEN, (Late of Cochran, Gowen & Co.), BANKER AND BROKER, No. 111 S. THIRD Street, PHILADELPHIA. Stocks and Bonds Bought and Sold on Commission in Philadelphia and New York. Gold and Government Securities dealt in. New York quotations by Telegraph constantly received. COLLECTIONS made on all accessible points. INTEREST allowed on deposits. 3 10 1m

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P. S. PETERSON & Co., Stock and Exchange Brokers, No. 39 South THIRD Street, Members of the New York and Philadelphia Stock and Gold Boards. STOCKS, BONDS, Etc. bought and sold on commission only at either city. 1 36 1m

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